Toitū Te Whenua
Land Information
New Zealand

Our Ref DOIA 26-247

24 April 2026

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Tēnā koe Aaron

Response to your official information request

Thank you for your request made under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA), transferred by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment to Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) on 27 March 2026 for information relating to the SouthPAN programme.

Please see LINZ's response for each part of your request below:

1. *Confirmation of whether the United States Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) has any involvement (direct or indirect) in the SouthPAN programme.*

   LINZ can confirm that there is no involvement, direct or indirect, from DARPA in the SouthPAN programme.

2. *Details of any partnerships, subcontractors, or third-party agencies involved in the programme beyond those publicly disclosed.*

   SouthPAN is a joint initiative between Geoscience Australia (GA) and LINZ.

   Contracts for the delivery of SouthPAN are held by GA with the following parties:

   - Lockheed Martin Australia (ground segment infrastructure) – its main subcontractors are Lockheed Martin Space, Zeta Associates and GMV,
   - Viasat (satellite services) – its main subcontractor is SwissTo12, and
   - The MITRE Corporation (safety assurance).

   Separately, LINZ has contracted Airways NZ to support certification for aviation users in New Zealand.

LINZ does not hold information about subcontracting arrangements below that level. Those arrangements are a matter between GA's contractors and their own subcontractors.

3. *Copies of, or access to, official documentation outlining the scope and purpose of the contract with Lockheed Martin.*

   Please refer to the SouthPAN Request For Tender (Attachment 1) document for the scope and purpose of the work.

4. *Any assessments, briefings, or reports regarding potential dual-use capabilities of the system (civilian and military applications).*

   SouthPAN is a public service with no specific military functionality. Unlike GPS, which operates distinct open and military services, SouthPAN provides open services only. LINZ does not hold any information regarding dual-use or military applications of the SouthPAN system. This part of your request is therefore formally refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, as the information is not held by LINZ and we do not believe it is held elsewhere.

5. *Any privacy, security, or surveillance impact assessments conducted in relation to SouthPAN.*

   LINZ conducted a Privacy Impact Assessment (Attachment 2) in relation to SouthPAN. Some information has been withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the OIA to protect the privacy of natural persons.

   No security or surveillance impact assessments were conducted, as SouthPAN is a one-way broadcast service that does not collect, transmit, or store user data and has no capability to track or identify individual devices or users. Insofar as your request relates to such information, this part is therefore refused under section 18(g) of the OIA, for the reason outlined above.

6. *Clarification on whether SouthPAN is intended to integrate with, support, or operate alongside existing or planned telecommunications infrastructure, including 5G networks or broader "smart city" systems.*

   SouthPAN is a satellite-based positioning service that improves the accuracy of location data available to compatible devices. SouthPAN was not designed with 5G or smart city systems in mind, but devices used in those systems may be able to utilise SouthPAN and benefit from the improved accuracy it provides.

It is also worth noting that SouthPAN does not track devices. SouthPAN broadcasts a signal, and it is the receiving device that uses that signal to determine its own location.

7. *Details of any ground-based infrastructure located within New Zealand that supports SouthPAN, including but not limited to reference stations, uplink facilities, or monitoring sites, and their general locations and functions.*

   SouthPAN's ground-based infrastructure in New Zealand comprises three types of facilities: GNSS Reference Stations (GRS), Ground Control Centres (GCC), and Correction Processing Facilities (CPF). These are connected via the SouthPAN Wide Area Network and work together to monitor satellite signals, process corrections, and uplink data to the SouthPAN geostationary satellite. Further technical details on the SouthPAN system architecture can be found in the SouthPAN Service Definition Document for Signal-In-Space Open Services.

   The New Zealand installations will be located at the following sites:
   - GCC and CPF: Space Operations Awarua, Invercargill – this facility serves as the satellite ground control and uplink processing centre for New Zealand, housing dual radio frequency uplinks and a control centre.
   - GRS: Space Operations Awarua (Invercargill), Timaru Airport, Tākaka Airport, Gisborne Airport, Auckland Airport, and Chatham Islands Airport – these reference stations receive GNSS signals from satellites and send the data to the correction processing facilities.

Where information has been withheld under section 9 of the OIA, we are of the view the withholding of the information is not outweighed by the public interest to make that information available.

You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or freephone 0800 802 602.

Please note, this response letter outlining our decision on your request, **with your personal details withheld**, and any attached documentation will be published on the LINZ website. This is likely to be published by 29 May 2026.

Nāku noa, nā

M Appleyard.

Michael Appleyard
Head of Location Information